Follow these basic off-duty recreation safety tips to avoid mishaps and improve your chances of having a fun and enjoyable summer. This format was designed so you may customize it with your command logo or your own message.

How to use this handout:

1. To customize this document, insert your command logo in the area provided.

2. Use the last page (this page) to list important points of contact and phone numbers for your command.

3. To print this handout as booklet. Print the pages back to back and fold lengthwise to create a 5x7 handbook.

For questions, contact april.phillips@navy.mil or call (757) 444-3520, Ext. 7312.

For more summer safety resources and information, visit www.safetycenter.navy.mil

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Leading Causes of Recreation Deaths and Injuries

- Drowning
- Water Sports
- Falls
- Outdoor Recreation
- Team and Contact Sports

The beginning of summer means it's time to play ball, go fishing, hike, camp, or just have a backyard barbecue. Whatever your pleasure, apply risk management when planning those activities. Most of the things that can hurt you or go wrong are easy to anticipate and avoid. A few smart decisions go a long way toward maintaining our Navy and Marine Corps combat readiness. Remember, our forces are affected just as drastically by an off-duty mishap as by one occurring at work.

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Play Hard To Win, But Play It Safe

- Sports injuries are inevitable, but you can do some things to help prevent them:

✓ *Make sure you have the proper skills and training before participating in any sport.*

✓ *Use the proper protective gear for a particular sport. This may lessen the chances of being injured.*

✓ *Minimize the chance of muscle strain or other soft-tissue injury by warming up before starting. Cool down later to loosen the body's muscles.*

✓ *Apply sunscreen and wear a hat (where possible) to reduce the chance of sunburn.*

✓ *If a person receives a soft-tissue injury (a sprain or a bone injury), immediately treat with RICE (rest, ice, compression, elevation).*

✓ *Schedule frequent water breaks during practices and games, and use misting sprays to keep the body cool.*

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Get the Grill Primed for Tasty BBQ Dishes

- Summertime chefs can reduce the chance of serious injury by adhering to simple safety precautions.

Cooking On Charcoal Grills:

✓ *Place grill in well-ventilated area and away from children's play area.*

✓ *Wear tight fitting clothing.*

✓ *Stand up wind when lighting the fire.*

✓ *Do not use flammable liquids, such as gas, to start the fire or to relight the coals.*

✓ *Attend to the grill at all times.*

- ✓ *Before disposing of coals, make sure they are cold.*

Cooking With Propane Grills:

✓ *Place grill in well-ventilated area and away from children's play area.*

✓ *Check valves and hoses for leaking gas.*

✓ *Read manufacturer's instructions when lighting grill.*

✓ *Raise hood before turning on gas.*

✓ *Transport and store gas cylinders in an upright position.*

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You Are The Key To Water Safety

- Your water fun depends on you, your equipment and other people who, like yourself, enjoy spending leisure time on, in or near the water. Let's take a look at your responsibilities:

✓ *Make sure the boat is in top operating condition and no tripping hazards exist.*

✓ *The boat should be free of fire hazards and have clean bilges.*

✓ *Safety equipment, required by law, is on board, maintained in good condition, and you know how to properly use these devices.*

✓ *File a float plan with a relative or friend.*

✓ *Have a complete knowledge of the operation and handling characteristics of your boat.*

✓ *Know your position and know where you are going.*

✓ *Maintain a safe speed at all times to avoid collision.*

✓ *Keep an eye out for changing weather conditions, and act accordingly.*

✓ *Know and practice the Rules of the Road (Navigation Rules).*

✓ *Know and obey Federal and state regulations and waterway markers.*

✓ *Maintain a clear, unobstructed view forward at all times. "Scan" the water back and forth; avoid "tunnel" vision. Most boating collisions are caused by inattention.*

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Learn Water-Survival Skills [In the Pool]

- Always have a first-aid kit and emergency phone contacts handy. Adults should be trained in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).
- Always use approved personal floatation devices (life jackets.)
- Barriers can offer added protection against drowning. Power or manual covers will completely cover a pool and block access to the water; however, be sure to drain any standing water from the surface of the pool cover as a child can drown in very small amounts of water.
- Remove toys from in and around the pool when not in use. They can attract children to the pool.
- Never leave a child alone near water – at the pool, the beach or in the tub.
- Enroll children over age three in swimming lessons taught by qualified instructors. But keep in mind that lessons don't make your child "drown-proof."

Older children risk drowning when they overestimate their swimming ability or underestimate the water depth.

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Mind Those Sparks and Embers

- Attend professional displays.
- If you decide to have a display make sure fireworks are legal.
- Never try to relight fireworks that have not fully functioned or discharged.
- Keep fireworks away from children.
- Check the package for instructions on storage and use.

Keep a bucket of water in case of a malfunction or fire.

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Know What To Do When Lightning Strikes

- Florida, Texas and North Carolina (areas with large concentrations of Marines and Sailors) consistently rank as the top three states for lightning related deaths. Since lightning can't be stopped or prevented, you need to know what actions to take during lightning.
- Stay inside away from doors and windows.
- Avoid contact with corded phones, electrical equipment or cords and plumbing (don't wash hands, shower, wash dishes, or do laundry)
- If outdoors, stay away from water, metal objects and trees. Crouch down, put your feet together, duck your head, place hands over ears to minimize hearing damage from thunder.

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Learn Water-Survival Skills [In your Boat]

- Always use approved personal floatation devices (life jackets), and make sure your passengers do, too. The U.S. Coast Guard estimates nearly 9 of 10 drowning victims were not wearing one.
- Learn to swim. Sooner or later, you're going in, and you don't want to have to rely on a life preserver or a passenger.
- Don't drink while boating. It leaves you tipsy, both mentally and physically. More than half of the people who drown in boating accidents had been drinking.
- Before you launch, tell someone where you're headed and when you'll be back at the dock. In an emergency, rescuers will need to know where to start looking.
- Keep learning about boats and the water. Groups including the U.S. Power Squadron and the Coast Guard Auxiliary teach classes in navigation, weather and emergency procedures.
- Check the forecast and watch the weather while you're underway. If you see or hear a storm, get back to land.

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Fall-Proofing Your Home

- Use sturdy wooden tables with rounded corners, instead of glass.
- Keep electrical and telephone cords out of walkways.
- Secure all carpet with double-back tape and install slip-resistant finishes in bathtubs.
- Remove hazards. Harmless-looking items like a child's crayon or a magazine on the floor can easily cause a fall.
- Install handrails on stairways and bathtubs and make sure they are securely attached to the wall.
- Clean up grease, water and other liquids immediately. Don't wax floors.
- Keep your windows closed and locked when children are around. When opening windows for ventilation, open windows that children cannot reach. Also, set and enforce rules about keeping children's play away from windows and/or patio doors.
- Keep furniture – or anything children can climb – away from windows.
- Use appropriate ladders and step-stools to get out-of-reach items. Pay attention to warning labels on

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Prevent Snake Bites

- Snakes avoid humans but will definitely bite if stepped on or otherwise trapped.
- Most bites occur in and around the ankle. About 99 percent of all bites occur below the knee, except when someone accidentally picks up or falls on the snake.
- Poisonous snakes live on or near the ground and often like rocks, wood piles and other spots that offer both a place to sun and a place to hide.
- Watching where you step, put your hands, or sit down is one of the best ways to prevent snake bites.

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Say "Bug-Off" to Bugs [Black Widow Spider]

- The black widow is a spider with a shiny black body, thin legs, and an hourglass shaped red/white mark on its abdomen. The female is much larger than the male and is one of the largest spiders in the United States. Males generally do not bite. Females bite only when hungry, agitated or protecting the egg sac. The black widow is not aggressive. More than 80 percent of all bite victims are adult men.
- It is a neurotoxin that causes little local reaction but does cause pain and spasms in the larger muscle groups of the body within 30 minutes to three hours. Severe bites can cause respiratory failure, coma and death.
- Black widow spider bites are the leading cause of death from spider bites in the United States. The venom is 14 times more toxic than rattlesnake venom.
- If working in or around the house, stay away from dry, secluded, dimly lit areas.
- If bitten, call 911 immediately.

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Fall-Proofing Your Workplace

- Keep your eyes and mind on the job at hand. Don't be caught daydreaming in slippery and dangerous work areas.
- Use appropriate ladders and step-stools to get out-of-reach items. Pay attention to warning labels on ladders.
- Install guardrail, safety net, or personal fall-arrest system in construction sites.
- Repair carpet tears immediately.
- Use safety cord covers to provide protection for power cords in high-traffic areas.
- Stack boxes neatly and at an acceptable level.
- Allow plenty of time to complete chores. This reduces the need to rush!
- If working in a wet area, wear slip-resistant footwear and keep the footwear clean of mud and debris.
- If working in a farm, keep farm machinery, grain bin and silo steps, and ladders free of mud build-up.
- Make sure that adequate handrails are present to prevent falling from ladders and steps.

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Prevent Fall Injuries Outdoors

- Supervise children in the playground and pay particular attention to tall equipment that provides an easy way up (or into) but not down (or out).
- Climbing can be hazardous. Some Sailors and Marines have been killed while rock climbing. Take training classes and climb with appropriate equipment and an experienced buddy.
- If participating in recreational parachuting, follow these simple steps:

✓ *Attend an approved United States Parachuting Association (USPA) course of instruction given by a certified USPA instructor.*

✓ *Learn to fly defensively - anticipate the actions of others.*

✓ *Watch out for slower traffic below and faster traffic above.*

✓ *Create a safer situation by landing in a different place than everyone else and/or at a different time and avoid radical landings.*

✓ *Know your emergency procedures.*

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Say "Bug-Off" to Bugs [Mosquitoes]

- Mosquitoes deliver an itchy bite and can spread disease. They are most active at dawn and dusk. Protect yourself by following these protective measures:

✓ *Use repellent with DEET. Read label before use and carefully follow directions. Take special care when using repellents on children.*

✓ *When going out, wear a long sleeve shirt, long pants and a hat.*

- One way to prevent mosquitoes from spawning is to control the elements that provide breeding grounds for them:

✓ *Get rid of all standing water.*

✓ *Change water in birdbaths, fountains, wading pools, and animal troughs at least once a week.*

✓ *Clean gutters in spring and fall to ensure proper drainage.*

✓ *Fix leaky sprinklers and faucets.*

✓ *Repair or replace screens.*

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Say "Bug-Off" to Bugs

- Insect bites and stings are common, and most are considered minor. It is only when the insect is poisonous or when the patient has an allergic reaction and runs the risk of developing anaphylactic shock that the situation becomes an emergency. Even under those conditions, accurate diagnosis and prompt treatment can save lives and prevent permanent tissue damage.

Preventive measures:

✓ *Destroy all nests around your living place.*

✓ *Keep your feet covered outdoors.*

✓ *Avoid bright colored clothing/perfumery products.*

✓ *Prefer to wear tight rather than loose clothing.*

✓ *When you encounter the insect, stand still or retreat slowly. If it lands on skin, quickly brush it off.*

✓ *Use a personal first-aid kit on individuals with allergies.*

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Learn Outdoors Survival Skills [Camping]

- Check weather forecasts before you leave.
- Use water-repellant and wind-resistant material for tents and sleeping bags.
- Wear proper fitting layer clothing, boots & cap.
- Apply insect repellant and/or mosquito netting.
- Bring a cooler for perishable foods.
- Do not use combustible materials within 10 feet of campfire.
- If you have a medical condition, check with your physician before heading out.

Pack a first-aid kit; include special medications for members of your group.

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Learn Outdoors Survival Skills [Hiking]

- Inventory supplies and equipment you may need, such as an internal/external-frame backpack, first-aid kits, a flashlight, a compass, maps, and a whistle in case you get lost.
- Always hike with a buddy or a group of four. In case someone is hurt, another can stay with the victim while two go for help. Also, tell someone where you're heading.
- Wear absorbent clothing to prevent hypothermia in case of exposure to water or cold temperature. It is always best to layer your clothing.

Wear the proper hiking boots and make sure you waterproof them at least 24 hours before heading out. If buying brand-new boots before your hike, make sure you break them in to avoid hot spots that can turn to blisters.

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Don't Let the Heat Get You

- Drink fluids in the right amount to avoid dehydration and hyponatremia (deficiency of sodium in the blood).
- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat to keep your head and face cool, and for added protection from damaging sun exposure. The neck, face and ears should be protected.
- Wear sunscreen that has an SPF of at least 15. Make sure children are also adequately protected.
- Monitor those at risk - previous heat injury/elderly.
- On the job, follow work/rest cycles.

Good physical conditioning and proper weight is key.

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Prevent Heat Injuries

- Heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps, and heat rash are possible when your become overexerted in the heat. Put your health first so you can enjoy the summer. To prevent fatal injuries, know the signs of heat injuries and the steps to take to minimize risk.
- *Heat Cramps.* Heavy sweating; painful spasms usually in the leg or abdomen muscles. Provide cool water, shade, and monitor.
- *Heat Exhaustion.* Person experiences nausea, dizziness, weakness, headache, pale and moist skin, heavy perspiration, normal or low body temperature, weak pulse, dilated pupils, disorientation, fainting spells. Provide water, shade, elevate feet and seek immediate medical attention.
- *Heat Stoke.* Person experiences headache, dizziness, confusion, rapid/strong pulse, and hot, dry skin, high body temperature of 106 or higher possibly leading to vascular collapse, coma, and death. Move to a cool shaded area, soak victim with water and fan, elevate feet and seek immediate medical attention. This

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Learn Outdoors Survival Skills [Caving in the Desert]

- *Carry Plenty of Water.* No dependable sources of water exist in the desert regions. One gallon of water per person, per day is the absolute minimum that should be carried. When planning a hike, remember that water weighs approximately 8 pounds per gallon. When the water is half gone, it is time to turn back. Don't forget extra water for your vehicle. Do not ration your water. It will only do you good if you drink it.
- *Dress Properly.* In summer, layered clothing slows dehydration and minimizes exposure. Good hiking shoes, loose fitting natural-fiber clothing, a wide brimmed hat, sunglasses and sunscreen are a must. Desert temperatures can reach over 90° Fahrenheit and drop below 50° Fahrenheit in one day. Summer temperatures can reach 125° Fahrenheit in some locations.
- *Plan Your Trip Carefully.* Always tell someone where you are going and when you will return. Learn how to use a map and a compass before you hike. It is easy to become disoriented in the desert

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Exercise Caution on the Wheels [Bicycles and Non-Powered Scooters]

- Always wear a properly-fitted helmet. Use of Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)-approved bicycle helmet is mandatory when riding on DON installations.
- Do not use portable headphones or other listening devices while riding.
- Wear light-colored clothing in the daytime and reflective gear for nighttime.
- Pay attention to obstacles. Losing control because of excessive speed, alcohol, and maneuvering to avoid other vehicles or pedestrians lead the way to bicycling mishaps.
- Ride with traffic and avoid high-density areas such as boardwalks and busy intersections, if possible.

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Exercise Caution on the Wheels [Off-Road Motorcross ATVs]

- Proper training is a must when riding these recreational vehicles. For required training, contact your base safety office.
- The following protective personal equipment is required for off-road motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs):

  ✓ *A Department of Transportation-approved helmet with fastened chin strap.*

  ✓ *Impact or shatter-resistant eyeglasses, goggles, or face shield attached to the helmet.*

  ✓ *Brightly colored outer, upper garment during the day and a reflective outer garment during the night. Wear long-sleeved shirt or jacket, long-legged trousers and full-finger leather or equivalent gloves and sturdy footwear.*
- Do not drink alcohol before or during operation of these vehicles.

  Use a buddy system and stay on designated trails.

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